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Speak Out
Chicago Tribune
435 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear Sirs:

The enclosed is submitted as a Speak Out article.

I am a former Chicagoan. I used to be a research mathematician, but several years ago, after becoming disillusioned with research and technology, I quit, and I now live a hermit-like existence in the mountains of western Montana.

I have not given my telephone number because I have no telephone.

Sincerely yours,

Theodore J. Kaczynski

THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STOP SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Theodore J. Kaczynski
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We are all familiar with the blessings technology has brought in the form of convenience, comfort, and longer life-expectancy. But during the last couple of decades there has been a growing awareness of the heavy price we have paid for these advantages. It has become a truism to say that the individual is reduced to the status of a gear in the machine. Small business fades away as big corporations, armed with computers and sophisticated organizational techniques, take over. Some scientists predict, for the near future, computers with all-round intelligence surpassing that of man. Others develop methods of mind-control through insertion of electrodes in the brain.

Taxes always go up, never down. Why? Because the increasing complexity of a technological society FORCES government to assume more and more functions whether it wants to or not. Thus a larger and larger proportion of our labor, represented by taxes, is directed toward collective rather than personal goals.

It should be obvious by now that runaway technical growth poses a desperately serious threat to the freedom and self-respect of the individual human being. It is no answer to say that we must reject the "bad" aspects of technology

and retain only the "good" ones. This can be done only to a very limited extent because technology increasingly is a unified whole in which every part is dependent on every other part.

Moreover, it is a myth to suppose that we rationally "choose" the way we employ a new technique. A society cannot choose the manner in which it uses a new invention or discovery in the same way as an individual chooses his use of an auto or a sewing-machine. New technology assumes a role in society through a complex sociological process that no one really understands. Did we CHOOSE urban congestion, psychologically manipulative advertising, or the replacement of small business by big corporations?

"Instead of rejecting technology we must find a way to reconcile it with human values." That's fine -- but while technology rushes on at breakneck speed, no one has any realistic, practical proposals for controlling it. Historically, social problems of this type have proved extremely difficult to solve, and solutions (if there are any) can only be worked out after a long period of painstaking experimentation. Present technological progress is so rapid that before we have fairly begun work on a solution, it will be too late.

"You can't stop progress. Change is inevitable." Maybe so. But does it make sense to spend money to ACCELERATE a process that so threatens our individuality? The United States government devotes large sums to technical research;

a great proportion of our research is supported directly or indirectly by public funds. If this support were phased out, technical progress would be drastically slowed. It might even be slowed enough so that we could find some means of dealing with technology before we are converted into -- pardon the melodramatic language -- an army of automated zombies.